



Completions*

Housing units completed in the fourth quarter of 2004, at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,836,000 units, were down a statistically insignificant 1 percent from the previous quarter but up 6 percent from the same quarter of 2003. Single-family completions, at 1,550,000 units, were up a statistically insignificant 1 percent from the previous quarter and up 6 percent from the rate of a year earlier. Multifamily completions, at 262,000 units, were a statistically insignificant 11 percent below the previous quarter but 13 percent above the same quarter of 2003.

In 2004, a total of 1,844,300 housing units were completed, including 1,533,300 single-family units and 288,100 multifamily units. Compared with the previous year, total completions increased 10 percent, single-family units rose 11 percent, and multifamily units grew 10 percent.

	Latest Quarter	Previous Quarter	Same Quarter Previous Year	% Change From Previous Quarter	% Change From Last Year
Total	1,836	1,856	1,725	- 1**	+ 6
One Unit	1,550	1,538	1,467	+ 1**	+ 6
Five Plus	262	294	233	- 11**	+ 13

*Components may not add to totals because of rounding. Units in thousands.

**This change is not statistically significant.

Sources: Census Bureau, Department of Commerce; and Office of Policy Development and Research, Department of Housing and Urban Development



Manufactured (Mobile) Home Shipments*

Shipments of new manufactured (mobile) homes were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 139,000 units in the fourth quarter of 2004, which is 8 percent above the previous quarter and 10 percent above the rate of a year earlier.

A total of 131,000 units were shipped in 2004, the same rate as 2003.

	Latest Quarter	Previous Quarter	Same Quarter Previous Year	% Change From Previous Quarter	% Change From Last Year
Manufacturers' Shipments	139	128	126	+ 8	+ 10

*Units in thousands. These shipments are for HUD-code homes only and do not include manufactured housing units built to meet local building codes, which are included in housing starts figures.

Source: National Conference of States on Building Codes and Standards



HOUSING MARKETING



Home Sales*

Sales of new single-family homes totaled 1,153,000 units at a seasonally adjusted annual rate (SAAR) in the fourth quarter of 2004, nearly unchanged from the previous quarter but up a statistically insignificant 3 percent from the fourth quarter of 2003. The number of new homes for sale at the end of December 2004 was 443,000 units, up 7 percent from the past quarter and up 18 percent from the fourth quarter of 2003. At the end of December, inventories represented a 4.8 months' supply at the current sales rate, up 17 percent from the previous quarter and up 20 percent from the fourth quarter of last year. In 2004, 1,183,000 new houses sold, up 9 percent from last year.

Sales of existing single-family homes for the fourth quarter of 2004 reported by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® totaled 6,790,000 (SAAR), up 2 percent from the third quarter of 2004 and up 8 percent from the fourth quarter of 2003. The number of units for sale at the end of the fourth quarter of 2004 was 2,180,000, 9 percent below the previous quarter and 5 percent below the fourth quarter of 2003. At the end of the fourth quarter of 2004, a 3.9 months' supply of units remained, 7 percent fewer than the previous quarter and 9 percent fewer than the fourth quarter a year ago.

In 2004, sales of existing single-family homes rose to 6,675,000, up 9 percent over the past year.

	Latest Quarter	Previous Quarter	Same Quarter Previous Year	% Change From Previous Quarter	% Change From Last Year
New Homes					
New Homes Sold	1,153	1,155	1,116	—	+ 3**
For Sale	443	413	377	+ 7	+ 18
Months' Supply	4.8	4.1	4.0	+ 17	+ 20
Existing Homes					
Existing Homes Sold	6,790	6,677	6,297	+ 2	+ 8
For Sale	2,180	2,390	2,300	- 9	- 5
Months' Supply	3.9	4.2	4.3	- 7	- 9

*Units in thousands.

**This change is not statistically significant.

Sources: New Homes—Census Bureau, Department of Commerce; and Office of Policy Development and Research, Department of Housing and Urban Development; Existing Homes—NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®



Apartment Absorptions

In the third quarter of 2004, 45,100 new, unsubsidized, unfurnished, multifamily (five or more units in structure) rental apartments were completed, up a statistically insignificant 5 percent from the previous quarter and up a statistically insignificant 6 percent from the third quarter of 2003. Of the apartments completed in the third quarter of 2004, 65 percent were rented within 3 months. This absorption rate is a statistically insignificant 10 percent above the previous quarter and 16 percent above the same quarter of the previous year. The median asking rent for apartments completed in the third quarter was \$956, which is a statistically insignificant 7 percent below the previous quarter but a statistically insignificant 3 percent above a year earlier.

	Latest Quarter	Previous Quarter	Same Quarter Previous Year	% Change From Previous Quarter	% Change From Last Year
Apartments Completed*	45.1	42.9	42.5	+ 5**	+ 6**
Percent Absorbed Next Quarter	65	59	56	+ 10**	+ 16
Median Rent	\$956	\$1,024	\$925	- 7**	+ 3**

*Units in thousands.

**This change is not statistically significant.

Sources: Census Bureau, Department of Commerce; and Office of Policy

Development and Research, Department of Housing and Urban Development



Manufactured (Mobile) Home Placements

Manufactured homes placed on site ready for occupancy in the third quarter of 2004 totaled 123,000 at a seasonally adjusted annual rate, a statistically insignificant 5 percent below the level of the previous quarter and 13 percent below the third quarter of 2003. The number of homes for sale on dealers' lots at the end of the third quarter totaled 38,000 units, 6 percent above the previous quarter but a statistically insignificant 1 percent below the same quarter of 2003. The average sales price of the units sold in the third quarter was \$57,000, a statistically insignificant 2 percent above the previous quarter and a statistically insignificant 1 percent above the price in the third quarter of 2003.

	Latest Quarter	Previous Quarter	Same Quarter Previous Year	% Change From Previous Quarter	% Change From Last Year
Placements*	123.0	129.7	140.7	- 5**	- 13
On Dealers' Lots*	38.0	36.0	38.3	+ 6	- 1**
Average Sales Price	\$57,000	\$56,000	\$57,000	+ 2**	+ 1**

*Units in thousands. These placements are for HUD-code homes only and do not include manufactured housing units built to meet local building codes, which are included in housing completions figures.

**This change is not statistically significant.

Note: Percentage changes are based on unrounded numbers.

Sources: Census Bureau, Department of Commerce; and Office of Policy Development and Research, Department of Housing and Urban Development



FHA 1–4 Family Mortgage Insurance*

Applications for FHA mortgage insurance on 1–4 family homes were received for 178,000 (not seasonally adjusted) properties in the fourth quarter of 2004, down 14 percent from the previous quarter and down 34 percent from the fourth quarter of 2003. Total endorsements or insurance policies issued totaled 153,100, down 24 percent from the third quarter of 2004 and down 54 percent from the fourth quarter of last year. Purchase endorsements, at 99,900, were down 27 percent from the previous quarter and down 46 percent from the fourth quarter of 2003. Endorsements for refinancings decreased to 53,300, a 20-percent decrease from the third quarter and a 64-percent decrease from the fourth quarter a year ago.

The total number of FHA applications received in 2004 was 945,600, a 42-percent decline from 2003. Total endorsements were 826,600, a decline of 40 percent from last year. Purchase endorsements, at 502,300, declined 26 percent from 2003, and the 324,300 refinancings were 54 percent below the previous year's total.

	Latest Quarter	Previous Quarter	Same Quarter Previous Year	% Change From Previous Quarter	% Change From Last Year
Applications Received	178.0	207.9	268.0	– 14	– 34
Total Endorsements	153.1	202.2	333.1	– 24	– 54
Purchase Endorsements	99.9	135.9	183.9	– 27	– 46
Refinancing Endorsements	53.3	66.3	149.2	– 20	– 64

*Units in thousands of properties.

Source: Office of Housing, Department of Housing and Urban Development



PMI and VA Activity*

Private mortgage insurers issued 377,700 policies or certificates of insurance on conventional mortgage loans during the fourth quarter of 2004, down 10 percent from the third quarter of 2004 and down 23 percent from the fourth quarter of 2003; these numbers are not seasonally adjusted. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) reported the issuance of mortgage loan guaranties on 42,400 single-family properties in the fourth quarter of 2004, down 27 percent from the previous quarter and down 63 percent from the fourth quarter of 2003.

In 2004, private insurers issued 1,708,972 certificates of insurance, a decrease of 31 percent from 2003. Total VA mortgage loan guaranties decreased 49 percent to 262,791 from 2003 to 2004.

	Latest Quarter	Previous Quarter	Same Quarter Previous Year	% Change From Previous Quarter	% Change From Last Year
Total PMI Certificates	377.7	418.1	490.5	– 10	– 23
Total VA Guaranties	42.4	57.8	115.4	– 27	– 63

*Units in thousands of properties.

Sources: PMI—Mortgage Insurance Companies of America; and VA—Department of Veterans Affairs

